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TOBY.

TOBY was a sheep of middling size, lightly built, finely limbed, as agile as a deer, with dark intelligent gazelle-like eyes, and a small pair of neatly curled horns, with the points protruding about an inch from his forehead. His colour was white except on the face, which was slightly darker.

As an old sailor I wish to say something of Toby's history. I was on board the good brig *Reliance* of Arbroath, bound from Cork to Galatz, on the left bank of the Danube. All went well with the little ship until she reached the Grecian Archipelago, and here she was detained by adverse winds and contrary currents, making the passage through the islands both a dangerous and a difficult one. When the mariners at length reached Tenedos, it was found that the current from the Dardanelles was running out like a mill-stream, which made it impossible to proceed; and accordingly the anchor was cast, the jolly-boat was lowered, and the captain took the opportunity of going on shore for fresh water, of which they were scarce. Having filled his casks, it was only natural for a sailor to long to treat himself to a mess of fresh meat as well as water. He accordingly strolled away through the little town; but soon found that butchers were as yet unknown in Tenedos. Presently, however, a man came up with a sheep, which the captain at once purchased for five shillings. This was Toby, with whom, his casks of water, and a large basket of ripe fruit, the skipper returned to his vessel. There happened to be on board this ship a large and rather useless half-bred Newfoundland. This dog was the very first to receive the attentions of Master Toby, for no sooner had he placed foot on the deck, than he ran full tilt at the poor Newfoundland, hitting him square on the ribs and banishing almost every bit of breath from his body. 'Only a sheep,' thought the dog, and flew at Toby at once. But Toby was too nimble to be caught, and he planted his blows with such force and precision, that at last the poor dog was fain to take to his heels, howling

with pain, and closely pursued by Toby. The dog only escaped by getting out on to the bowsprit, where of course Toby could not follow, but quietly lay down in a safe place to wait and watch for him.

This first adventure shewed that Toby was no ordinary sheep. How he had been trained to act an independent part no one could tell. His education, certainly, had not been neglected. That same evening the captain was strolling on the quarter-deck eating a bunch of grapes, when Toby came up to him, and standing on one end, planted his fore-feet on his shoulders, and looked into his face, as much as to say: 'I'll have some of those, please.'

And he was not disappointed, for the captain amicably went shares with Toby. Toby appeared so grateful for even little favours, and so attached to his new master, that Captain Brown had not the heart to kill him. He would rather, he thought, go without fresh meat all his life. So Toby was installed as ship's pet. Ill-fared it then with the poor Newfoundland; he was so battered and cowed, that for dear life's sake he dared not leave his kennel even to take his food. It was determined, therefore, to put an end to the poor fellow's misery, and he was accordingly shot. This may seem cruel, but it was kind in the main.

Now there was on board the *Reliance* an old Irish cook. One morning soon after the arrival of Toby, Paddy, who had a round bald pate, be it remembered, was bending down over a wooden platter cleaning the vegetables for dinner, when Toby took the liberty of insinuating his woolly nose to help himself. The cook naturally enough struck Toby on the snout with the flat of the knife and went on with his work. Toby backed astern at once; a blow he never could and never did receive without taking vengeance. Besides, he imagined, no doubt, that holding down his bald head as he did, the cook was desirous of trying the strength of their respective skulls. When he had backed astern sufficiently for his purpose, Toby gave a spring: the two heads came into violent

collision, and down rolled poor Paddy on the deck. Then Toby coolly finished all the vegetables, and walked off as if nothing had happened out of the usual.

Toby's hatred of the whole canine race was invincible. One day when the captain and his pet were taking their usual walk on the promenade, there came on shore the skipper of a Falmouth ship, accompanied by a very large formidable-looking dog. And the dog only resembled his master, as you observe dogs usually do. As soon as he saw Toby he commenced to set his dog upon him; but Toby had seen him coming and was quite *en garde*; so a long and fierce battle ensued, in which Toby was slightly wounded and the dog's head was severely cut. Quite a multitude had assembled to witness the fight, and the ships' riggings were alive with sailors. At one time the brutal owner of the dog, seeing his pet getting worsted, attempted to assist him; but the crowd would have pitched him neck and crop into the river, had he not desisted. At last both dog and sheep were exhausted, and drew off, as if by mutual consent. The dog seated himself close to the outer edge of the platform, which was about three feet higher than the river's bank, and Toby went, as he was wont to do, and stood between his master's legs, resting his head fondly on the captain's clasped hands, but never took his eyes off the foe. Just then a dog on board one of the ships happened to bark, and the Falmouth dog looked round. This was Toby's chance, and he did not miss it or his enemy either. He was upon him like a bolt from a catapult. One furious blow knocked the dog off the platform, next moment Toby had leaped on top of him, and was chasing the yelling animal towards his own ship. There is no doubt Toby would have crossed the plank and followed him on board, had not his feet slipped and precipitated him into the river. A few minutes afterwards, when Toby, dripping with wet, returned to the platform to look for his master, he was greeted with ringing cheers; and many was the piastre spent in treating our woolly friend to fruit. Toby was the hero of Galatz from that hour; but the Falmouth dog never ventured on shore again, and his master as seldom as possible.

On her downward voyage, when the vessel reached Sulina, at the mouth of the river, it became necessary to lighten her in order to get her over the bar. This took some time, and Toby's master frequently had to go on shore; but Toby himself was not permitted to accompany him, on account of the filth and muddiness of the place. When the captain wished to return he came down to the river-side and hailed the ship to send a boat. And poor Toby was always on the watch for his master if no one else was. He used to place his fore-feet on the bulwarks and bleat loudly towards the shore, as much as to say: 'I see you, master, and you'll have a boat in a brace of shakes.' Then if no one was on deck, Toby would at once proceed to rouse all hands fore and aft. If the mate Mr Gilbert pretended to be asleep on a locker, he would fairly roll him off on to the deck.

Toby was revengeful to a degree, and if any one struck him, he would wait his chance, even if for days, to pay him out with interest in his own coin. He was at first very jealous of two little pigs which were bought as companions to him; but latterly he grew fond of them, and as

they soon got very fat, Toby used to roll them along the deck like a couple of foot-balls. There were two parties on board that Toby did not like, or rather that he liked to annoy whenever he got the chance, namely the cook and the cat. He used to cheat the former and chase the latter on every possible occasion. If his master took pussy and sat down with him on his knee, Toby would at once commence to strike it off with his head. Finding that she was so soft and yielding that this did not hurt her, he would then lift his fore-foot and attempt to strike her down with that; failing in that, he would bite viciously at her; and if the captain laughed at him, then all Toby's vengeance would be wreaked on his master. But after a little scene like this, the sheep would always come and coax for forgiveness. Our hero was taught a great many tricks, among others to leap backward and forward through a life-buoy. When his hay and fresh provisions went done, Toby would eat pea-soup, invariably slobbering all his face in so doing, and even pick a bone like a dog. He was likewise very fond of boiled rice, and his drink was water, although he preferred porter and ale; but while allowing him a reasonable quantity of beer, the captain never encouraged him in the bad habit, the sailors had taught him, of chewing tobacco.

It is supposed that some animals have a pre-science of coming storms. Toby used to go regularly to the bulwarks every night, and placing his feet against them snuff all around him. If content, he would go and lie down and fall fast asleep; but it was a sure sign of bad weather coming before morning when Toby kept wandering by his master's side and would not go to rest.

One day Captain Brown was going up the steps of the Custom-house, when he found that not only Toby but Toby's two pigs were following close at his heels. He turned round to drive them all back; but Toby never thought for a moment that his master meant that he should return.

'It is these two awkward creatures of pigs,' thought Toby, 'that master can't bear the sight of.'

So Toby went to work at once, and first rolled one piggie down-stairs, then went up and rolled the other piggie down-stairs; but the one piggie always got to the top of the stair again by the time his brother piggie was rolled down to the bottom. Thinking that as far as appearances went, Toby had his work cut out for the next half-hour, his master entered the Custom-house. But Toby and his friends soon found some more congenial employment; and when Captain Brown returned, he found them all together in an outer room, dancing about with the remains of a new mat about their necks, which they had just succeeded in tearing to pieces.

Their practical jokes cost the captain some money one way or another.

One day the three friends made a combined attack on a woman, who was carrying a young pig in a sack; this little pig happened to squeak, when Toby and his pigs went to the rescue. They tore the woman's dress to atoms and delivered the little pig. Toby was very much addicted to describing the arc of a circle; that was all very good when it was merely a fence he was flying over, but when it happened that a window was in the centre of the arc, then it came rather hard on the captain's pocket.

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In order to enable him to pick up a little after his long voyage, Toby was sent to country lodgings at a farmer's. But barely a week had elapsed when the farmer sent him back again with his compliments, saying that he would not keep him for his weight in gold. He led the farmer's sheep into all sorts of mischief that they had never dreamed of before, and had defied the dogs, and half-killed one or two of them.

Toby returned like himself, for when he saw his master in the distance he bleated aloud for joy, and flew towards him like a wild thing, dragging the poor boy in the mud behind him.

Toby was taken on board a vessel which was carrying out emigrants to New York, and was constantly employed all day in driving the steerage passengers off the quarter-deck. He never hurt the children, however, but contented himself by tumbling them along the deck and stealing their bread and butter.

From New York Toby went to St Stephens. There a dog flew out and bit Captain Brown in the leg. It was a dear bite, however, for the dog, for Toby caught it in the act and hardly left life enough in it to crawl away. At St Stephens Toby was shorn, the weather being oppressively hot. No greater insult could have been offered him. His anger and chagrin were quite ludicrous to witness. He examined himself a dozen times, and every time he looked round and saw his naked back he tried to run away from himself. But when his master, highly amused at his antics, attempted to add insult to injury, by pointing his finger at him and laughing him to scorn, Toby's wrath knew no bounds, and he attacked the captain on the spot. He managed, however, to elude the blow, and Toby walked on shore in a pet. Whether it was that he was ashamed of his ridiculous appearance, or of attempting to strike his kind master in anger, cannot be known, but for three days and nights Toby never appeared, and the captain was very wretched indeed. But when he did return, he was so exceedingly penitent and so loving and coaxing that he was forgiven on the spot.

When Toby arrived with his vessel in Queen's Dock, Liverpool, on a rainy morning, some nice fresh hay was brought on board. This was a great treat for our pet, and after he had eaten his fill, he thought he could not do better than sleep among it, which thought he immediately transmuted to action, covering himself all up except the head. By-and-by the owner of the ship came on board, and taking a survey of things in general he spied Toby's head.

'Hollo!' he said, 'what's that?' striking Toby's nose with his umbrella. 'Stuffed, isn't it?'

Stuffed or not stuffed, there was a body behind it—as the owner soon knew to his cost—and a spirit that never brooked a blow, for next moment he found himself lying on his back with his legs wagging in the air in the most expressive manner, while Toby stood triumphantly over him waiting to repeat the dose if required.

The following anecdote shews Toby's reasoning powers. He was standing one day near the dock-yard foreman's house, when the dinner bell rang, and just at the same time a servant came out with a piece of bread for Toby. Every day after this, as soon as the same bell rang—'That calls me,' said Toby to himself, and off he would trot to

the foreman's door. If the door was not at once opened he used to knock with his head; and he would knock and knock again until the servant, for peace-sake, presented him with a slice of bread.

And now Toby's tale draws near its close. The owner never forgave that blow, and one day coming by chance across the following entry in the ship's books, 'Tenedos—to one sheep, 5s,' he immediately claimed Toby as his rightful property. It was all in vain that the captain begged hard for his poor pet, and even offered ten times his nominal value for him. The owner was deaf to all entreaties and obdurately. So the two friends were parted. Toby was sent a long way into the country to Carnoustie, in Forfarshire, to amuse some of the owner's children, who were at school there. But the sequel shews how very deeply and dearly even a sheep can love a kind-hearted master. After the captain left him, poor Toby refused all food and died of grief in one week's time.

'I have had many pets,' says Captain Brown, 'but only one Toby.'

HELENA, LADY HARROGATE.

CHAPTER XVI.—LIFTS A CORNER OF THE MASK.

RUTH WILLIS bending forward, her gloved fingers clasped upon the open letter that she held, and her pale face on fire, as it were, with eager passion, seemed sadly out of tune with the still beauty of that silvan spot, where first the crystal Start, freed from its moorland cradle, gushed forth as a real river, although of puny dimensions, bearing its watery tribute to the sea. Above, arched the feathery larch, the slender hazel, and the tapering ash. Branches of the mountain-ash projected like the stone frettings of some medieval belfrey. The clear sweet warble of mavis and merle came throbbing softly to the ear from the dim green heart of the summer woodlands. The letter which she had purloined—the theft may have been prompted by the impulse of the moment, and it is charitable to hope that such deeds were new to her—was now hers, to peruse at her leisure. She read it then, did Ruth Willis, again and again, slowly and deliberately, scanning and weighing every word, as though she had been a student of the cuneiform character, puzzling out Babylonian tablets by the aid of vague and tentative keys to the long-dead language of which they bore the impress.

The letter ran thus :

8 BOND'S CHAMBERS,
ST NICHOLAS POULTNEY, LONDON.

DEAR SIR SYKES—It might be as well perhaps that we should come to an understanding at once respecting the business on which I spoke to you at the *De Vere Arms* some days since. I do not know whether you are aware that I hold evidence substantiating the entire circumstances of the case, which I could at any time reveal. I will mention no names of place or person, since this is unwelcome to you; but in return for my consideration for your interests, and for those whose prosperity and good name are now knit up in yours, I consider myself to possess a claim upon your confidence. I therefore permit myself to think that as your legal adviser I could conduct your affairs so that you should be under no apprehension for the future, provided

always that the entire management (professionally) of your estate and property should be placed in my hands. This, after due consideration, I think would be the most expedient manner of settling matters for the advantage of all parties concerned.

Trusting that you may see this arrangement in the same light as myself, and that it may meet with your approval, as the only means of arriving at a definitive understanding, I shall await your reply. I beg to remain, my dear sir, very obediently and faithfully yours,

ENOCH WILKINS, Solicitor.

Such was the letter which Sir Sykes Denzil had unguardedly left upon his library table; and it may be admitted that a more impudent epistle has rarely been addressed to a gentleman of equal station to that of the proprietor of Carbery. It was difficult at first sight to believe that a demand so audacious in itself, and so offensively urged, could be intended as anything else than a sorry jest. Yet that the writer was quite in earnest, nay more, that he felt himself assured of not craving in vain for the coveted boon, was palpable to so attentive a critic as was Ruth Willis.

'If any man had dared to write thus to me,' she said, slowly hissing out the words between her half-shut teeth, 'and I had filled the position held by yonder pompous dolt, I would have—ay, given him cause to repent it.'

And the lurid light that glimmered in her dark eyes, and the hardening of her shrewd pale face until it seemed as though of chiselled marble rather than sentient flesh, and the swift and sudden gesture with which she raised and shook her clenched hand, as though it held a dagger—these signs were the revelation of a fierce and unscrupulous nature, kept down by the pressure of circumstances, but ready at pinch of need to flame forth, as the hot lava bubbles and seethes beneath the crust of cold ashes in which the vines of the Italian peasant have struck root.

Again and with deliberate care did the baronet's ward read the letter through. Then she refolded it and replaced it in her pocket, and then consulted her watch. Only a few minutes had as yet elapsed since her escape—for it was little else—from the mansion.

'I must not go back as yet,' she said thoughtfully. 'By this time the whole household will be astir like a hive of angry bees, if, as is all but certain, Sir Sykes has not had self-control enough to keep his own counsel as to the loss he has sustained. He should have burned this choice epistle the moment he had made himself master of its purport; but he is of that order of men who treasure up the very proofs that sooner or later overwhelm them with a weight of silent evidence. Was it not the learned forger, silver-tongued, plausible Dr Dodd, who was left alone with the fatal document that brought him to the gallows, alone in a room where a brisk fire was blazing? One flash of mother-wit, one motion of the hand, and nothing but a heap of tinder would have remained to bear witness of the fraud. But no! The doomed wretch waited passive for the hangman's fingers to adjust the hempen noose about his miserable neck. So would not I!'

Again the girl glanced impatiently at her watch. 'How Time lags!' she exclaimed petulantly,

as she marked the slow crawling of the thin black minute-hand around the dial; 'heeding nothing, influenced by nothing, inexorable in his measured pace. It is a pain to such as I am to be forced to loiter here inactive, when there is a foe to cope with, a peril to avert.'

She said no more, but paced restlessly to and fro along the river-bank, beneath the arching boughs, with somewhat of the air and tread of a caged panther wearing away the sullen hours of captivity behind the restraining bars. Her very step had in it somewhat of the liveness which we notice in the movements of the savage, and the working of her keen features told how deeply her busy brain was pondering on the events of the day. Ruth's face, when once it was withdrawn from the observation of others, was a singularly expressive one. When she had left the room wherein Jasper had fallen asleep among his pillows, the countenance of Sir Sykes's ward had been eloquent with weariness and contempt. Now it told of resentment restrained, but only in part restrained, by a caution that was rather of habit than of instinct.

'An hour more! yet an hour,' said the girl at length, again looking at her watch, and then she stood leaning against the tough stem of a quivering mountain-ash that almost overhung the brawling torrent. She still kept in her left hand the book which she had had with her when entering the library at Carbery; but even had not the volume been one which she had lately perused, she was in no mood for reading. Manifestly her mind was shaping out some desperate resolution.

'I will do it!' she said at last, lifting her head with a defiant glitter in her lustrous eyes; 'before I sleep it shall be written. I know and gauge beforehand the risk of such a course; know too that I am loosening my own grasp on the helm if I invite another to aid me. But that is better than to be foiled at the outset, and after weeks spent in this self-schooling, and in the sickening task of cajoling a shallow, knavish egotist, such as the future Sir Jasper will be until his dying day. Let those look to it who for their own schemes venture to cross my path!'

The hour, however slowly it might appear to pass in the estimation of one whose nerves were on fire with excitement, nevertheless did wear itself out, and there was an end of waiting. With tranquil step and unruffled brow, Sir Sykes's ward returned to her guardian's house, to find, as she had anticipated, confusion and dismay prevalent there; the servants sullen or clamorous, the baronet's daughters distressed, and Sir Sykes himself in a state of feverish suspicion, which almost made him forget the traditions of good-breeding.

'Do you, Miss Willis, know anything of this?' he asked half rudely, the instant that he caught sight of his ward.

'I—know of what?' returned Ruth innocently, as she lifted her eyes, with a startled look, to his.

'You forget, papa,' said Lucy Denzil, almost indignantly, 'that Ruth has heard of nothing. She was away from the house all the time.'

'Yes, yes; I beg pardon of course,' exclaimed the baronet reddening, but still fixing his eyes searchingly on the placid face of his ward.

The Indian orphan bore his scrutiny with an admirable composure. Her lower lip trembled a little, as was natural, when she turned towards

Lucy. 'Pray do tell me,' she said, 'what has happened? for it really does seem as though I had been unfortunate enough to make Sir Sykes angry with me.'

'Papa has lost a letter—a letter of importance,' said Lucy, blushing as she spoke; 'and as the servants deny all knowledge of it, and its loss'—

'Say theft, not loss!' interrupted the baronet with unwonted harshness. 'I make no doubt that the letter was stolen from my desk in the library, on which I had left it for but some two minutes, while I went to speak with my son in the White Room. The French window nearest to the fireplace was open, giving an easy means of entry, as of egress, for the purloiner of this letter, who must have been on the watch for an opportunity of surprising my secrets—that is to say,' stammered Sir Sykes, who felt the imprudence of these last words—'of basely prying into my private correspondence.'

'Are you quite, quite sure, papa dear,' pleaded Blanche, 'that you left the letter there, instead of bestowing it in some safe place for safe keeping, which may afterwards have escaped your memory, and will presently be recollected? Such things have happened often and often, even to the most methodical, and'—

'There, there, my girl!' broke in the baronet peevishly. 'Have I not heard that argument repeated *ad nauseam* by every man and maid that I have questioned; and is it not the stock answer to all inquiries after missing trinkets or valuables unaccounted for? I grant that I can prove nothing. If I could'—

He did not complete the sentence, but crushing down the wrath that almost choked his voice, turned away. Nothing, at this unpleasant conjecture, could be in better taste, or more simple, than Ruth's demeanour. She began to cry. It was the first time since the day of her arrival that any one at Carbery had seen her in tears, and now both Blanche and Lucy came kindly to kiss her and console her with whispered entreaties to excuse Sir Sykes for an indiscriminate anger which there was much to palliate. But Ruth soon dried her eyes, and going up to her guardian laid her hand upon his arm and looked up timidly in his face.

'Let me be useful,' she said. 'Let me help in hunting high and low for this letter; pray, pray do, dear Sir Sykes, you who have been so very, very kind to me since I have been here.'

Nothing could be prettier. And Sir Sykes, though in his present irritable condition he actually shuddered at her light touch upon his arm, as though he had been in contact with a snake, was compelled to say a word or two of apology.

'I am greatly annoyed,' he said awkwardly, 'and have been unjust and inhospitable, I fear, and must ask you to forget my rudeness. I am best alone.'

Sir Sykes therefore withdrew, and for some time was seen no more; while Jasper, who had been an amused spectator of the turmoil, sauntered back to the White Room, muttering as he went: 'Lucky, rather, that this child had so perfect an alibi, or the governor would have tried, convicted, and sentenced his only son and heir as the light-fingered captor of his lost property. A new sensation, it strikes me, that of injured innocence. And talking of that—how nicely Miss Ruth, be

she who she may, played her part—not one bit overdone—it was perfect! We breathe here an atmosphere of mystery; but it will be strange if, when I am all right again, I do not make a push to get at the governor's secret, whatever it may be.'

The letter, it need hardly be said, remained undiscovered by the volunteer searchers who undertook the quest of it; but gradually the indignant household became more calm, and the general voice confirmed the comfortable opinion, that Sir Sykes had unwittingly locked up the missing document in some desk or drawer, whence it would one day be satisfactorily extracted.

CURIOUS RESEARCHES INTO HUMAN CHARACTER.

THERE can be little doubt that the domain of material science is being invaded on more than one side by the sciences which deal more especially with the material world and with the physical universe around us. When physiologists discovered that the force or impulse which travels along a nerve, which originates in the brain, and which represents the transformation of thought into action, is nearly allied to the electrical force—now one of man's most useful and obedient ministers—one avenue to the domain of mind was opened up. And when physiologists, through the aid of delicate apparatus, were actually enabled to measure the rate at which this nerve-force travels along the nerve-fibres, it may again be said that physical science was encroaching on the domain of mind, being in a certain sense thus enabled to measure the rapidity of thought.

A study, exemplifying in a more than ordinary degree the application of the methods of physical science to the explanation of states of mind, was brought under the notice of the members of the British Association at the last meeting of that body. In the department of Anthropology, or the science investigating the physical and mental constitution of the races of man, Mr Francis Galton, as president of this section, devoted his address to an exposition of the classification or arrangement of groups of men, according to their habits of mind, and their physiognomy.

Of the curious and absorbing nature of such a study nothing need be said. Lavater's method of pursuing the study of character through the investigation of the features of the human face has long been known. But Lavater's system is on the whole much too loose and elementary to be regarded as satisfactory by modern scientists, whose repudiation of phrenology as a system capable of explaining the exact disposition of the brain functions, has unquestionably affected Lavater's method also. Mr Galton refers at the outset of his address to the fact we have already alluded to—namely, that physiologists have determined the rate at which nerve-force, representing a sensation or impulse of thought and action, travels along the nerves. The common phrase 'as quick as thought' is found to be by no means so applicable as is generally supposed, especially when it is discovered that thought or nervous impulse, as compared with light or electricity, appears as a veritable laggard. For whilst light travels at the rate of many thou-

sands of miles—about one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles according to the latest researches—in a second of time, nerve-force in man passes along his nerves at a rate varying from one hundred and ten or one hundred and twenty to two hundred feet per second. Or, to use Mr Galton's words, nerve-force is 'far from instantaneous' in its action, and has 'indeed no higher velocity than that of a railway express train.'

As we could naturally suppose from a consideration of this fact, small animals presenting us with a limited distance for nerve-force to travel, will avoid rapid blows and shift for themselves in the struggle for existence at a much quicker rate than large animals. Take two extreme cases in illustration of this fact. A mouse hears a suspicious or threatening sound, and at once, so to speak, accommodates its actions and movements to its protection. The ear of the mouse, as one of its 'gateways of knowledge,' is situated so close to the brain that the interval which elapses between the reception of the sound by the ear, or between its transmission as an impulse to the brain and the issue of a command or second impulse from the brain to the muscles of the body for the purpose of movement, is too short to be perfectly appreciated by the observer. In a whale, on the contrary, which may attain a length of eighty feet, a much longer interval will elapse before action of body follows on nervous impulse, seeing that the nerve-impulse has a longer distance to travel. Assuming that in such animals as the whales the nerve-action travels at the rate of seventy or eighty feet per second, it follows that in a large whale which has been struck near the tail by a harpoon, a second or so will elapse before the impulse is transmitted to the brain, whilst another second will pass before the second impulse is sent from the brain to put the muscles of the tail in action for the purpose of retaliating upon the harpooner. In such a case it is assumed that the brain of the animal will be the nervous centre or station at which information is received, and from which instructions are in turn telegraphed to the various organs and parts of the body. In the actual details of the case, however, it is probable that the spinal marrow of the animal or some part of it would act as the 'head-office' for receiving and issuing commands. We know that a headless frog will wipe off with one foot a drop of vinegar that has been placed on the other, and in the absence of the brain we thus assume that the spinal cord may act as a nerve-centre.

Doubtless the spinal marrow discharges this function naturally; and in view of this latter supposition, the interval between the reception of a blow and the muscular actions of an animal would be of less duration than in the case we have just supposed, where the brain is regarded as the central station of the nervous system. As an eminent authority in physical science has remarked, 'the interval required for the kindling of consciousness would probably more than suffice for the destruction of the brain by lightning, or even by a rifle-bullet. Before the organ (that is, the brain) can arrange itself, it may therefore be destroyed, and in such a case we may safely conclude that death is painless.'

But confining ourselves to the domain of human thought, it seems perfectly clear that the differences between persons of different temperament are

in reality referable in great part to the varying rates at which nervous impulses are transmitted through the nerves, and to or from the brain. The difference between a person of phlegmatic disposition and a person of sanguine temperament, may thus be properly enough referred to the varying rates with which sensations and feelings are appreciated and acted upon. Disposition or temperament thus becomes referred, secondarily, to the manner in which and aptitude with which nerves receive and transmit impressions. Primarily, of course, we must refer the exact causes of the quicker or slower transmission of impulses to the constitution of the individual who exhibits them.

Mr Galton gives a very interesting example of the differences to be observed between various individuals in the respects just noted, by a reference to a practice common amongst astronomers. He says: 'It is a well-known fact that different observers make different estimates of the exact moment of the occurrence of any event. There is,' he continues, 'a common astronomical observation in which the moment has to be recorded at which a star that is travelling athwart the field of view of a fixed telescope, crosses the fine vertical wire by which that field of view is intersected. In making this observation it is found that some observers are over-sanguine and anticipate the event, whilst others are sluggish, and allow the event to pass by before they succeed in noting it.' This tendency of each individual is clearly not the result either of inexperience or carelessness, since, as astronomers well know, 'it is a persistent characteristic of each individual, however practised in the art of making observations or however attentive he may be.' And so accustomed indeed are astronomers to these differences in observers, that a definite and standing phrase—that of the 'personal equation'—is used in that science to express the difference between the time of a man's noting the event and that of its actual occurrence. Every assistant in an observatory has his 'personal equation' duly ascertained, and has this correction applied to each of his observations. This most interesting fact relates exact or mathematical science in the most curious manner to the mental character of an individual. Mr Galton, however, does not rest merely with the announcement of this latter result. He goes much further in his theoretical inquiry, and suggests that peculiarities in the respect just noted might be found to be related to special points in the conformation of the body. Thus could the 'personal equations' of astronomers be related to the height of body, age, colour of hair and eyes, weight, and temperament, some valuable facts might be deduced regarding the union of definite characters to form a special constitution.

Some other methods may be cited of estimating the differences between various temperaments in appreciating sensations and in acting upon them. If a person is prepared to give an instantaneous opinion as to the colour of a certain signal—black or white—but is unaware of the particular colour which is to be exhibited, and if he is further instructed to press a stop with his right hand for the one colour and a left-hand stop for the other, the act of judgment necessary to determine the particular stop in each instance, is found to occupy an appreciable interval. This is parti-

cularly the case if a single signal has been previously shewn, and the observer's quickness of sight has been tested and calculated by his pressing a single stop whenever he saw the object. The comparison between the interval elapsing between the mere sensation of sight and the act of pressing the stop in the latter case, and the interval which elapses when the observer has to make up his mind as to the difference between two signals, is seen to be very marked.

Setting thus before his mind a certain number of tests of individual temperament and character such as have been illustrated, the observer may next proceed to the task of discovering whether persons who exhibit similar qualities of mind in these experiments, can be proved to be related to each other in other particulars of their physical or mental disposition. Mr Galton has ingeniously suggested that by an arrangement of mirrors, four views of a person's head might be taken at once, and would thus afford an ordinary photographic portrait, a portrait of a three-quarter face, a profile view, and a figure of the top of the head respectively. Such a series of views would present all the aspects required for a comparison of the general as well as special contour of the head of the individual with the heads of others photographed in like manner.

Our author, whose researches on the heredity of men of genius and the transmission from one generation to another of qualities belonging to the highest development of man's estate, are well known, turned his attention to the opposite phase of human life and character, and investigated in an avowedly casual, but still important manner, the likenesses and differences between members of the criminal classes of England. The social and practical importance of a study such as the present may be readily estimated. There are few persons who have not considered the bearings and influence of criminal antecedents upon the offenders of the present day. Although to a very large extent our temperaments and dispositions are of our own making, and are susceptible of the favouring influences of education and moral training, there can be no doubt of the truth of the converse remark, that to a very great extent the traits of character we inherit from our parents exercise an undeniable influence over us for weal or for woe. If, therefore, through research in the direction we have indicated, it can be shewn that criminality runs in types, our notions of criminal responsibility, and our ideas regarding the punishment, deterrent and otherwise, of the criminal classes, must be affected and ameliorated thereby.

That criminality, like moral greatness, 'runs in the blood,' there can be no doubt. It would in fact be a most unwonted violation of the commonest law of nature, were we to find the children of criminals free from the moral taints of their parents. As physical disease is transmissible, and as the conditions regulating its descent are now tolerably well ascertained, so moral infirmities pass from one generation to another, and the 'law of likeness' is thus seen to hold true of mind as well as of body. Numerous instances might be cited of the transmission of criminal traits of character, often of very marked and special kind. Dr Despine, a continental writer, gives one very remarkable case illustrating the transmission from one generation to another of an extraordinary

tendency to thieve and steal. The subjects of the memoir in question were a family named Chrétien, of which the common ancestor, so to speak, Jean Chrétien by name, had three sons, Pierre, Thomas, and Jean-Baptiste. Pierre in his turn had one son, who was sentenced to penal servitude for life for robbery and murder. Thomas had two sons, one of whom was condemned to a like sentence for murder; the other being sentenced to death for a like crime. Of the children of Jean-Baptiste, one son (Jean-François) married one Marie Tauré, who came of a family noted for their tendency to the crime of incendiarism. Seven children were born to this couple with avowedly criminal antecedents on both sides. Of these, one son, Jean-François, named after his father, died in prison after undergoing various sentences for robberies. Another son, Benoist, was killed by falling off a house-roof which he had scaled in the act of theft; and a third son, 'Clain' by nickname, after being convicted of several robberies, died at the age of twenty-five. Victor, a fourth son, was also a criminal; Marie-Reine, a daughter, died in prison—as also did her sister Marie-Rose—whither both had been sent for theft. The remaining daughter Victoire, married a man named Lemerre, the son of this couple being sentenced to death for robbery and murder.

This hideous and sad record of whole generations being impelled, as it were, hereditarily to crime, is paralleled by the case of the notorious Jukes-family, whose doings are still matters of comment amongst the legal and police authorities of New York. A long and carefully compiled pedigree of this family shews the sad but striking fact, that in the course of seven generations no fewer than five hundred and forty individuals of Jukes blood were included amongst the criminal and pauper classes. The account appears in the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Prison Association of New York (1876); and the results of an investigation into the history of the fifth generation alone, may be shortly referred to in the present instance as presenting us with a companion case to that of the somewhat inaptly named Chrétien family. This fifth generation of the Jukes tribe sprang from the eldest of the five daughters of the common ancestor of the race. One hundred and three individuals are included in this generation; thirty-eight of these coming through an illegitimate grand-daughter, and eighty-five through legitimate grand-children. The great majority of the females consorted with criminals: sixteen of the thirty-eight have been convicted—one nine times—some of heinous crimes: eleven are paupers and led dissolute or criminal lives: four were inveterate drunkards: the history of three is unknown; and a small minority of four are known to have lived respectable and honest lives. Of the eighty-five legitimate descendants, only five were incorrigible criminals, and only some thirteen were paupers or dissolute. Jukes himself, the founder of this prolific criminal community, was born about 1730, and is described as a curious unsteady man of gipsy descent, but apparently without deliberately bad or intently vicious instincts. Through unfavourable marriages, the undecided character of the father ripened into the criminal traits of his descendants. The moral surroundings being of the worst description, the beginnings of criminality

became intensified, and hence arose naturally, and as time passed, the graver symptoms of diseased morality and criminal disposition.

The data upon which a true classification of criminals may be founded are as yet few and imperfect, but Mr Galton mentions it as a hopeful fact, that physiognomy and the general contour of the head can be shewn to afford valuable evidence of the grouping of criminals into classes. This method of investigation, however, it must be noted, is by no means a return to the old standing of phrenology, which, as all readers know, boasts its ability to mark out the surface of the brain itself into a large number of different faculties. The most that anthropologists would contend for, according to the data laid down, is, that certain general types of head and face are peculiar to certain types of criminals. Physical conformation of a general kind becomes thus in a general manner related to the mental type.

The practical outcome of such a subject may be readily found in the ultimate attention which morality, education, and the state itself, may give to the reclaiming of youthful criminals and to the fostering, from an early period in their history, of those tendencies of good which even the most degraded may be shewn to possess. If it be true that we are largely the products of past time, and that our physical and mental constitutions are in great measure woven for us and independently of us, it is none the less a stable fact, that there exists a margin of free-will, which, however limited in extent, may be made in the criminal and debased, and under proper training and encouragement, the foundation of a new and better life.

MONSIEUR HOULOT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—TO-DAY—TROUBLE.

WINTER came and passed away without anything happening to break the even tenor of existence. Spring came, and with spring the appearance of a new novel of Mr Collingwood Dawson. Having had a considerable share in its manufacture, I felt naturally anxious to know the result of its appearance. I had an encouraging note from Mrs Collingwood Dawson : 'Much liked—goes off very well : ' and I saw from the advertisements in the papers that the notices of the press were generally favourable. At the head of them all was the following extract from the *Hebdomadal Review* : 'High capacity—very good—many readers—enticing interest.' Tributes of appreciation that were valuable from a periodical rarely given to praise overmuch any one unconnected with the house it represents.

Soon after I had another note from my employer : 'I am coming over to confer with you on literary and other matters ; please make all necessary arrangements. I shall be accompanied by a female friend, but not, alas, by Mr Collingwood Dawson !'

The steamer that plies the Lower Seine in the summer months, came puffing up the river one fine breezy morning, and dropped into a little boat that put off to meet her, two female passengers, a quantity of boxes, and a little white dog. I recognised my expected visitors, and hastened

down to the landing-place to meet them. I explained that my house was not big enough to take them in ; but that I had secured rooms at the hotel close by, and that my wife and I hoped to have as much of their society as they could give us.

After they had settled down in their new abode, Mrs Collingwood Dawson came over to see me, and was shewn into the pavilion.

'I am in a good deal of doubt and difficulty,' she said ; 'and I have come to ask your opinion and discuss matters with you. But as it is no use putting half-confidence in you, and your opinion will be of little good unless you know fully all the circumstances of the case, I mean to tell you everything ; and will first begin, if you please, and if it does not bore you too much, with a little sketch of my life.'

I assured her that I should have great pleasure in listening to her, as anything connected with her was of interest to me.

'I am,' she began, 'the daughter of an official of the old India House ; and my father, who had held a good position there, and enjoyed a good income, left at his death no other provision for his widow and only child, myself, but the pensions to which we were entitled—a very handsome one indeed for my mother ; and for myself some seventy pounds a year, which ceased at my marriage. He had been during his lifetime very fond of good society, especially literary society ; and thus from early years I had been acquainted with many people who followed that profession. Consequently it is not surprising that I tried to add to an income sufficiently narrow by literary work, although I confess that I had no particular talent, and certainly no enthusiasm for the task, and met with little success. In this way I became acquainted with several publishers and many authors ; among others was my first husband. He was a man of great intellectual power and force of will, but quite without any ballast of judgment or common-sense. Still I was very much enthralled by his influence, and he having formed a violent passion for me, insisted on marrying me. Young and ill-advised, I gave way to his impetuosity, and married we were. I soon had cause to repent the hasty step. He had been a man of most irregular habits ; and after a brief period of devotion to me, he resumed them. Our household became a scene of constant jars and quarrels ; he wearied out my life, and I must have wearied out his. The beautiful soul that I thought I had recognised as enshrined in his somewhat ill-formed and stunted figure, had no existence for me. He was malignant and detestable, utterly—most utterly.'

Her voice trembled with anger at the retrospect, whilst her eyes filled with indignant tears.

'It was an ill-assorted match evidently,' I said. 'But why did you not agree to separate ?'

'I shrank from mentioning such a thing ; with all his faults, I believed that he was still at the bottom devotedly attached to me. Besides, such a step is always distressing and compromising. No ; I went on bearing my troubles, not silently indeed, for I have too much spirit, I confess, to make a meek and uncomplaining wife ; but I bore them anyhow, although I confess that any affection I ever had for him had been lost in the embroilments of our married life. You may think that I was to blame, and that if there were a real

attachment on his part towards me, I ought to have been able to manage him; but I tell you no! There was a certain malignity in his nature that made him spiteful and tormenting even to those whom he loved. Anyhow, life was a sorrowful burden to me whilst he was with me.'

She rose, looking quite overcome by the recital of her troubles. Her eyes were filled with tears; her hands trembled nervously, as she raised them to press the hair back from her forehead. I murmured a few words expressive of sympathy and good-will.

'Well!' she said, sitting down and wiping her eyes with a pretty embroidered handkerchief; 'not to dwell upon my troubles. I was at last relieved from the hateful knot by his death—a death I believe he contrived in a way that should leave me in an cruel and doubtful position as possible. He left home one day without giving me any intimation that he would stay away—that was his general practice—or leaving me any money to carry on the household expenses. And the next thing I heard of him was from a little village on the coast, that he had been drowned while bathing. I believe that he committed suicide. I ascertained that he had been informing himself most minutely of the set of the tides and currents about the coast, and with fiendish ingenuity had taken to the water at a time when the tide was certain to carry his body far out to sea.'

'But what object could he have had in that, madam?'

'Don't you see? The pension which I had lost in marrying revived on my widowhood. But he had contrived that his body should never be found. In vain I applied to the authorities to renew my pension. There had been several cases of attempted personation and fraud about these pensions, and they utterly refused to renew mine without absolute proof of my husband's death. This I was unable to afford to their satisfaction, his body never having been discovered. Still the circumstantial evidence was most strong, and I was advised to bring an action in the way of a petition of right. A circumstance, however, occurred,' said the widow with a slight blush, 'which rendered such a step unnecessary.'

'Ah! I see,' I cried; 'you married again?'

'Yes; and this time my venture was more fortunate. My second husband was an officer in the army, frank and free and brave. No young couple could have been happier. But alas! we were neither of us prudent in the management of our affairs: We had small means in the present, but great expectations, and we were too sanguine to think of the possibility of disappointment. Life became a series of feasts and fêtes. My husband sold out of the army, and we lived gaily enough on the proceeds of his commission, till that was all gone, and we saw ourselves brought to the verge of ruin. I must tell you that my husband was also of a literary turn, and wrote military sketches and so on, that brought in a little money, but nothing substantial.'

'We had one resource still left—the house in which we lived; it had been my mother's, and at her death she left it to me. It was a pretty little house in the neighbourhood of St John's Wood; but it was leasehold only, and the lease had not more than ten years to run. We had found it under these circumstances impossible to mortgage

our interest. We might have sold the lease; and that with the furniture, which had also been my mother's, would have realised five or six hundred pounds. But when that was gone, where should we look for shelter? Charles's great expectations—'

'Pardon me for interrupting you. You have mentioned your husband's Christian name: it will make your narrative clearer if you tell me also his surname.'

'Collingwood was his name—Charles Collingwood.'

'And the name of the first one was Dawson?'

'You have guessed rightly. To continue, Charles's great expectations had all come to a bad end. A rich relative, who had brought him up for his heir, took a great dislike to me, and cut him out of his will, for no reason in the world but that he had married me, and that we were very poor. When he died, and we found this out, it seemed that the world had come to an end for us. What was to be done? Live in the most niggardly way we might, but we could not live on nothing. First we began to sell the less essential parts of our belongings. We lived on old china for three months; and then we began on our paintings. We had some good ones by English artists, which my father had left behind him, and these kept us for a while. But this was like burning the planks of the ship to keep the engines going. Charles had tried hard for employment in the meantime. For the governorship of a colony; for a consulship; the post of adjutant of militia; the same thing in a Volunteer regiment; for the chief-constabulary of a large town; for the management of a brewery; and ever so many things besides. All of no use.'

'We must take in washing,' said Charles; 'and I will become a second Mantilini, and turn the mangle.'

'Lodgers were our next thought, and that seemed more feasible. Then some one advised us to let our house furnished. We put an advertisement in the papers, and by great good luck we had an offer for the whole of the house at once. Six guineas a week for May, June, and July. We made up our minds to take cheap lodgings somewhere on the coast, and spend only half our weekly six guineas, which would thus last us six months instead of three. As we were packing up our belongings and storing away the packages in the lumber-room, Charles stumbled over a lot of old boxes, from which arose a cloud of dust.'

'What are these old things?' he cried.

'I don't know anything about them. They were my first husband's books and papers.'

'Books, eh?' said Charles. 'Let's have a look at 'em;' and broke open one of the boxes. This, however, turned out to be full of packets of manuscripts. Charles made a wry face over them, but he took out a packet and began to read it. I went on with the work. I had everything to do then, I must tell you, for we had dismissed our servants, and lived in the house by ourselves with only a char-woman to help—quite in picnic style.'

'Well dinner-time came, and Charles, who was still up-stairs reading his manuscript, brought it down with him and laid it beside his plate, and went on again reading directly after dinner.'

'I tell you what it is, old woman,' he said, as we went to bed, 'I feel muddled with it all, and rather as if I'd been supping off pork chops

and Welsh-rabbit ; but there's something in that fellow's writings, only they are coarse, decidedly coarse."

"But I am tiring you," said Mrs Collingwood, looking up with a smile.

"Not at all. I am highly interested. Go on, please."

"We went away to the sea-side, and Charles took several packets of manuscript with him to amuse him, as he said, during the long days.

"Do you know," he said to me one evening, "I think one could make something out of these things. If we cut out the objectionable passages which I expect were in the way of their publication?"

"My dear Charles," I said, "these were his religion, and he would not have touched a word for worlds to make them more acceptable."

"And died a martyr to the faith, eh ?" said Charles. "Well, I shan't be so very particular. There's enough for a three-volume novel here, and I shall expurgate it and try its luck."

Charles was never much of a penman, but I was a neat quick writer, and thus the copying fell upon me. Charlie did the botching and patching, and dictated as I copied. But what a task it was ! I am sure the mere writing of it was worth all we were destined to get for it, let alone the author's work and our amendments. Then we got a lot of the most taking three-volume novels from the library, and counted the words and lines, so as to get ours about the right length. It was finished at last, just as our house became vacant ; and as soon as we got back to town I took it to a publisher. It was agreed that I was to do all this part of the work, for my poor Charlie used to say that if anything happened to him, I should find the use of these habits of business." Here she paused.

I coughed doubtfully. My knowledge of human nature led me to attribute the arrangement to shyness and laziness on his part. I did not, however, venture to disturb Mrs Collingwood's illusions.

She resumed : "To our surprise and joy, after a delay of not more than three or four months, we heard from the publishers accepting our novel. We did not get any large sum for it, it is true, but it was highly thought of, and was to be well advertised ; and that was the chief point. Whenever the author was inquired for, I gave out that he was my husband, but that he was an invalid. Charlie really was poorly at the time," she said blushing. "Ah, you shake your head ; but in these days, my dear M——, it is necessary to be *ruse* as well as clever."

"But why not have given it out as the work of a deceased author ?"

"Ah, that would never have done ! A publisher takes a first novel because he hopes for another and a better. Of what use is it to puff the one golden egg of a dead goose ? No ; we were right there—events have shewn it. Well, our novel was, as you know, a success. It went off like wild-fire, and our publishers fed the flame adroitly by issuing one edition after another—all of the same impression. All this time we were at work upon another, which also went down, although not so much relished as the first. I think we had purified it a little too much. Avoiding this error in a third, we again made a hit. Our fortune was now made and publishers were at our feet. But we were in this strait : we had come to an end of our finished

works ; all that were left now were mere sketches and outlines, many too vague, and others too extravagant to be of much use to us. Charles had good judgment and some critical power, but he had no creative faculty, neither had I. Happily we did not deceive ourselves on this point. The question to be solved was how to supply the want. To Charles the idea first suggested itself of trying to secure assistance from outside. It was quite evident that it would be useless to think of any person well known in the world of letters. We set ourselves to study the more obscure literature of the day."

I bowed politely, but with some inward mortification.

"Oh, don't think *you* are in question now," said the lady with an arch smile ; "wait to the end of the story. My husband came home one day in a state of great excitement. He had in his pocket a copy of the *Weekly Dredger*, which contained an instalment of a serial story just commenced.

"Read that," he cried. "When I had finished : "Now, what do you think ?"

"But I was trembling all over with terror.

"What's the matter ?" he cried.

"O Charles !" I said, "if I did not know it was impossible, I should say that no one but my late husband could have written this."

"So strongly was I penetrated with this idea, that for a long time I forbade him to make any inquiry after the author. At last we were so pressed to supply another novel that I consented that he should make inquiries. The story in the *Weekly Dredger*, we found, had become so grotesque and bizarre, that finally the editor brought it to an abrupt close himself, refusing to take any more of it ; and he made no difficulty whatever about telling our business agent in confidence the name of the writer. I must tell you we had found it necessary to employ an agent, Mr Smith, who has served us faithfully enough, but who was never permitted to see my husband. Well, Charles wrote cautiously to the author of this queer story, who, it seemed, lived in France ; asking him to send specimens of his stories, and specifying the quantity required for possible publication, with his terms. We had in reply a pile of manuscript. Judge of the relief I felt when I found that the handwriting was quite unfamiliar to me. His terms were so low that we had no difficulty in undertaking to accept all his work. For some seventy pounds a year we secured everything he wrote. A great deal of the stuff was utterly useless to us, but every now and then he gave us the framework of a powerful story. Well, all of a sudden he turns sulky and refuses to send any more. Charlie would have found some one to supply his place, no doubt. But now I come to the great misfortune of my life—with faltering voice—"the death of my dear husband."

"Your husband dead !" I cried, quite unprepared for the announcement.

"Yes, he is dead ; and unhappy me, I have not been able to mourn his loss except in secret and with precautions. The funeral even was conducted with as much caution as if he had been a felon, and we had been ashamed of having to own that he had belonged to us. And he was the kindest, most affectionate—

"But it was his own wish," she went on after a pause. "He planned out everything. You see

that although our writings—compilations should I call them?' she said with a faint attempt at a smile—'brought us in a nice income, yet we were pleasure-loving people, and had always been accustomed to plenty of society, and we had saved nothing out of it. We have two children, a boy at Rugby, and a daughter at an expensive school; and there is poor Charlie's sister, the lady who accompanies me, and she has no one else to depend upon but me. Besides, as Charlie urged before he died: "I am not Collingwood Dawson," he said; "why should my death be the cause of his? Keep him alive, old woman, to be a support to you and the children and Lizzie." Those were almost his last words, dear brave fellow! She rose and left the room, overcome by uncontrollable emotion.

My thoughts, after Mrs Collingwood quitted me, were rather of a serious turn. I reflected that my own interests were bound up in the same cause, and that my own livelihood hung very much upon keeping up Mr Collingwood Dawson as a going concern. It was too late to go back now. If I had gained experience I had lost connection. My own place had been filled up. Mr Collingwood Dawson had become as necessary to me as to the widow and her family. Still the idea of a person who never died, who enjoyed a sort of corporate existence, or like the living Buddha, transferred his identity from one body to another, a being who could go on writing novels and publishing them till the crack of doom, struck one with a kind of awe.

As a relief to the troubled current of my thoughts I took up a newspaper which Mrs Collingwood had brought with her. It was the *Hebdomadal Review*, the number containing the review of Collingwood Dawson's last novel. I turned to the page with a kind of pleased excitement, for the short abstract that I had seen in the advertisement, as you have seen, was calculated to give me the impression that the critique was an appreciative one. It was so short that I have no scruple in giving it *in extenso*: 'If it be necessary, and we suppose it is, that silly ill-educated people should be supplied with the morbid trash suited to their high capacity, there is no reason why Mr Collingwood Dawson should not cater for their wants. We can say of his novel that it is very good stuff of the kind. The pity is that there should be so many readers for this kind of stuff. We only hope that young ladies of the class who find Mr Dawson's compilations acceptable, will not be unduly led away from the paramount claims of seam and gusset and band by the enticing interest of his story.'

Satire like this does not hit very hard, however, and my only feeling after the first disappointment was of amusement at the ingenuity that had been able to extract the sting from it and secure the latent honey. One word, however, seemed dangerous—'compilations.' Was it possible that the critic had discovered the composite nature of Mr Collingwood Dawson?

'Can you lend me five pounds?' said a gruff voice behind me. I turned and saw the squat figure of M. Houlot close to my chair.

It was an embarrassing question. There was nothing in M. Houlot's appearance to invite confidence—at all events to the extent of five pounds. At the same time, M. Houlot had in my mind loomed into considerable importance, for since I

had heard Mrs Collingwood's story, I had identified him with the third portion of Mr Collingwood Dawson.

'Oh, if it requires consideration, don't think about it,' said Houlot roughly. 'I won't trouble you.'

'Stop a minute,' I replied; 'wait. I don't know whether I have the money. I must ask my wife.'

'Oh, you are one of the wretched slaves of a petticoat, are you?' said Houlot with a rasping laugh. 'I should have thought you had lived through *that* stage of your development.'

'As she will be the principal sufferer if the money should not be returned, she is entitled to a voice in the matter.'

'Look here! If it comes to asking your wife, I'll withdraw my request. I know what that means, well enough. But if you are afraid of not getting your money back, I'll give you security.—What security? Why, manuscripts worth ten, twenty pounds. I should say, if I were some people—of priceless value.'

'Ah!' I said to myself, 'there is Houlot, who has quarrelled with his bread-and-butter, and now he comes to me to borrow money to go on with. Would it not be better to send for Mrs Collingwood, to see if this is really the man who supplies her with her plots; and if so, to make the peace between them, and get him to continue the supply?'

Mrs Collingwood saved me the trouble of sending for her. I saw her coming across the garden to the pavilion. She was composed now and cheerful; she led one of my girls by the hand, and was telling her a story, I fancy, in which the child seemed uncommonly interested.

Houlot was standing leaning against the mantelpiece with his back to the doorway, and under his arm his stick, which he was rubbing with the point of his hook, as was his custom when vexed. I saw Mrs Collingwood coming in at the doorway—door and windows were wide open. All of a sudden her face whitened all over, and she tottered backwards. I ran to her assistance; but when I reached the garden, she had already disappeared within the house.

'Am I a hobgoblin, that I frighten people?' said Houlot savagely, coming to the door. 'Where's that woman who ran away?'

I made no reply; and he went on rubbing his stick with the iron hook, apparently in a very evil temper.

'I want that money particularly. I want to go to England and expose this Collingwood Dawson, to strip him of his borrowed plumes, and shew the British public what a daw this fellow is whom they admire. Come; give me this five pounds, and let me go.'

'I can't say anything more to you just now,' I replied. 'I will let you know to-morrow.'

'That will lose me two days; I want to start to-morrow.'

'I can't help it. I can't let you have the money now.'

Houlot saw that I was in some flurry and confusion, and thought probably that I was afraid of him, and that by bullying me a little he should get what he wanted.

'Come now!' he cried; 'go and get me that money. I know what I know, and I am not to be stopped for a paltry five-pound note.'

My reply was to shew him the door. He scowled at me, fingered his stick as if he had a mind to hit me, thought better of it seemingly, and went out growling inarticulately.

'Where is he, that man?' cried Mrs Collingwood meeting me in the doorway of the house, looking quite livid with fear. 'What do you know of him? Where does he come from?'

'He is your correspondent, the author of your plots.'

'Ah, then is he my husband!' she cried in a voice that, though low and subdued, was full of anguish. 'What a wretched being am I, to have seen him!'

'It would have been worse still had he seen you,' I muttered. 'Come, Mrs Collingwood—come into the garden, into the open air; you will be better there. Take my arm; keep up your heart; all will be well yet.'

'Where is he? where is he?' was all she could say.

'He is gone; you are quite safe.'

We began to pace up and down the garden together, she wringing her hands and writhing with pain and emotion.

'Do consider,' I said, 'that he has kept out of the way all these years, and that he is not likely to trouble you now.'

'Oh! I can't bear to think. The children—poor Charlie, what will become of us all?'

'The children will take no harm,' I said, 'if you act prudently. All will be well; and your late husband is out of the reach of any trouble.'

'Ah yes, poor Charlie! I wish I had died with him. Even now he may be reproaching me! How dreadful, dreadful it all is!'

I could not give her much consolation; for besides these troubles of the heart, other and less manageable difficulties I saw were impending.

At the first blush it was impossible to say what would become of us all in this imbroglio. Certainly if any one were entitled to be considered Collingwood Dawson, it was the man who had originated the works by which he had obtained his fame. On the other hand, he would never have had any success himself. No publisher would have looked twice at books which were so violent and coarse. All the labour and pains that had been taken in bringing his writings into an acceptable form, were they to go for nothing? And was it to be allowed that a man who had thrown off all ties and abandoned his place in the world, should resume them when other people had made them worth possessing? It seemed not; and yet the law would be on his side.

There was only one consoling feature in the position—the man had no money. He could not move without that; and if he had been able to obtain it from any other source, he would hardly have come to borrow from a stranger; but this was a very frail barrier after all. He might, if he were determined to get back to England, find his way to the nearest port, and get passed home by the consul as a distressed British subject. Why he had not gone over to England when he first discovered the use that had been made of his talents, was probably because he waited to complete some work he had in hand, which might serve as an introduction to the publishers, and a sort of voucher for his claim.

Was there, however, no possibility of mistake?

Was it perfectly certain that this was the missing husband? Mrs Collingwood had no hope that there was any error. She knew him perfectly. It was impossible that there should be two such people in the world together, identical in mind and in person. That his handwriting had so completely changed, seemed to her unaccountable; but it did not move her faith in his identity. And an explanation was soon found for this; for he had lost his right hand since his flight, and consequently wrote with his left.

I said just now that I could give Mrs Collingwood no comfort; but there was one thing that bound us all together and insured sympathy between us: we were so to speak all in the same boat. Our livelihood depended upon keeping up the integrity of Collingwood Dawson.

A MOORLAND WEDDING.

It was in the month of June last year, when the days were about their longest, that the scattered dwellers in the upland parish of L—— were excited by the intimation of a marriage in one of their glens. Among a sparse population an event of this sort necessarily happens but rarely, and as a consequence when it does happen it comes attended by much more 'pomp and circumstance' than would otherwise accompany it. As an angel sent by some gracious fate, it stirs the stagnant pool of existence, and revives hearts that may have drooped through dreary days of solitude. The people who have participated in it are livelier in their talk and wear a blither aspect for days and weeks afterwards.

A breeze was blowing through the bright June sunlight, and the shadows of a few clouds were moving quietly across the hills, when about three o'clock in the afternoon I set out on foot for the scene of the marriage that has been referred to. The point from which I started lay upon the highest tract of cultivated land at the head of a prettily wooded valley, and I had to walk seven miles by mountain-side and glen before reaching the cottage that was my destination. For the first portion of the way there is an excellent cart-road—excellent for a hill-country whose pastoral-bred pedestrians do not greatly need roads; but after some three miles have been got over the traveller finds himself almost literally at large among the mountains, with but a feeble indication of a foot-track along the brow of a deep ravine, and a mountain stream below.

Continuing my course, the glen began to expand again, and its slopes to lose their covering of brushwood. A strip of level verdure, broadening as I ascended, stretched on each side of the water; and after following several windings of the stream without any change in the character of its banks, the moorland cottage that I was in search of lay before me.

The first thing I observed was an animated crowd of people streaming out of the door two and two, and setting off for an elevation that stood some distance to the right. On arriving at the cottage I learned that these were the bride's people gone to meet the party of the bridegroom, and to take part in 'running the broose,' which is a foot-race among the young lads for the bride's maid's handkerchief. Herself the goal, the bride's maid, fluttering in white and scarlet, had ascended

to a knoll before the cottage, and some time afterwards held up a silk handkerchief to the eyes of the expectant runners.

I fancy there are few spectacles that produce in one's mind a stronger sense of savage freedom than that of civilised human beings let loose, coatless, vestless, bonnetless, to race among the hills. In less than two minutes from their starting on the homeward race they had sunk out of view at the foot of the highest hill, and when they hailed in sight again, they were much more widely scattered than at the beginning. Two or three in the rear had already dropped out of the race; but those in the front seemed to be still running with energy and determination. Once or twice again we lost them in the hollows, and each time they reappeared we could notice that their number was gradually getting smaller; so that by the time the leader swept across the stream in front of us, all other competitors had given up the contest as hopeless. A cheer broke forth as he struggled up the knoll panting and bemired to clutch the coveted prize, which, with similar ones thus gained, I find it is a great ambition among the young men in some districts to accumulate. The winner of the 'broose' was a tall and finely formed youth of fair complexion; with clear blue eyes and well-cut features.

As soon as the stragglers had come forward, followed by the bridegroom and his man, amid tremendous cheering, the marriage ceremony was proceeded with in the kitchen. It was a long low-roofed apartment, with innumerable shoulders of mutton in all the stages towards ham, depending from the rafters. The bride was led out of an anteroom, resting on her father's arm. He was a rather oldish man, with the history of a good many troubles plainly written upon his face. The bride was a broad-shouldered, brown-visaged, and gray-eyed maiden of about four-and-twenty; and her future husband, a loose-limbed, amiable-looking youth in a lavender necktie and fiery red hair, looked possibly a year or two younger. The service was performed by a Presbyterian clergyman, and was accordingly a short one. Immediately it was over there was a multitudinous shaking of hands with the happy couple. It was interesting to note the various phraseologies in which the numerous guests severally expressed their good wishes; all the degrees of feelings from that of ordinary regard to the most ebullient affection, being apparently represented.

While this process was going forward, the mother of the bride, a sallow-faced person with kindly black eyes, and gray hair smoothed neatly across her brow, took up a position by the fire to advance arrangements for the tea. You could see that the good woman was greatly excited and confused. Probably she had never had so many people under her humble roof before; and there were 'grand folk' among them too, the surrounding farmers and their families, for whose (comparatively) delicate palates she was quite unaccustomed to prepare food. Every now and then while proceeding with her duties, she would catch up the corner of her ample white apron, and wiping the perspiration from her forehead, would draw a long sigh, as of sadness or fatigue. The movements of the company around her seemed to attract her but little; all the evening she wore a preoccupied expression, and it was evident that she had within

her mind a picture of her own, on which her thoughts were dwelling. But what the scene was that was calling her away from the merriment of the hour I possessed no means of ascertaining; and the reader is at liberty to fill up this blank in the narrative as best delights his fancy.

A portion of the company now seated itself at a heavily laden tea-table that was laid out in an adjoining chamber; and here let me remark that as Scottish weddings are celebrated in the afternoon or evening, the entertainment known by the English as the *déjeuner*, is unknown to their northern neighbours. But there are few such teas served in cities or even in Lowland dwellings as had been that night prepared for us. The result of a good week's labour of several women in carrying, boiling, and baking, seemed to be placed upon the board. Let the reader remember that it was in Scotland that this wedding took place, and he will appreciate the bill of fare the better. It was by no means a much varied one, but the several articles had been provided in unlimited supply. Fresh baked scones lined each side of the table in castellated rows; platefuls of dark-coloured 'braxy' ham, cut from the mutton that hung on the rafters, stood in between them, with here and there a pile of thick cut, deeply buttered bread. There were also buns, 'cookies,' biscuits, and gimeracks, that must have been carried painfully over miles of moorland; and raised majestically at the head of the table was a little white bride-cake surmounted by a solitary flag.

When the company had crushed themselves into seats around the table, and were just going to operate upon the braxy, a big-boned, bleached-looking old man was furtively led on to the end of a bench that had been placed near the door. I soon discovered that, after the minister, this was for the time being the most important of the invited assembly. He was in fact no less a personage than the fiddler, and was, as he ought to have been, in keeping with the character of the traditional musician, almost stone-blind. This Demodocus had been led hither from his dwelling five miles over the hills by a little boy, his grandson, who had fair hair, and wore faded velvet and corduroys. The heartiness with which the veteran musician laid in a store of victual against the labour of a long night's fiddling, was a most refreshing sight. He was a long-faced, heavy-jawed man, and had rusty gray hair that fell unkempt upon a much worn velvet collar. A large scarlet cotton handkerchief was twisted carelessly about his neck, and came down in a loose fold upon his breast. He wore an aspect of silent passive misfortune; and as you looked at him it was difficult to imagine music dwelling in his soul, how much soever it might dwell in his fiddle.

As soon as the tea was ended, or rather this first instalment of it, he was guided to an elevated seat that had been prepared for him in a corner of the kitchen, where he began scraping and preluding with his fiddle. To many of the lads and lasses this was the first intimation of the musician's presence; and it was the signal for a little preliminary coquetry with the eyes, while it lit up their honest faces with blushes and expectant smiles.

A Scottish wedding without a dance is next door to no wedding at all, so little time was lost in

stepping to the floor. There were Scotch reels, country-dances, and polkas, and now and then a quadrille was decorously walked through by the two or three young farmers and their sweethearts. But unquestionably the Scotch reel was the favourite, and maintained the precedence throughout the whole of the entertainment. As most readers doubtless know, this is a lively and stirring dance, that permits a good deal of jumping and stamping, and is admirably adapted to the social requirements of a warm-hearted and excitable people. Whether its popularity in Scotland has anything to do with the Celtic origin of the inhabitants, I do not take upon me to suggest; but certain it is, that after seeing it performed, as on the present occasion, with all the vivacity that belongs to it, you would not think of associating it with a grave and solemn-minded race. To the uninitiated onlooker it is nothing but an indistinguishable confusion; in which he may observe that there is a great deal of bobbing with the head and shuffling with the feet, and that it is in nowise adapted to a staid person of fashion. Nevertheless it stood in high favour on the present occasion, and seemed to please abundantly the agile young persons who performed in it. What matter to them though it should be unfashionable! They had come to this wedding to enjoy themselves; and much as the horrid crew in 'Alloway's auld haunted kirk' despised foreign cotillions, so did these children of hills and valleys stick to their native reels and country-dances.

After a time, when the music had begun to work in his soul, and he had been set a-thinking upon 'the brave days of old,' you would notice a reverend senior bravely leading out some gay and handsome maiden, and challenging another gray-headed veteran to face him in the dance. These exhibitions of pluck and spirit in the fathers uniformly evoked hearty plaudits from the company; and some one would call out to 'Archie' the fiddler, 'to put his best foot foremost this time.' Archie had by this time got worked into a state of considerable energy and enthusiasm, and was in some respects quite a different character from that of two hours ago at the tea-table. The colour had travelled back to his old withered cheek, and his features looked a deal more soft and flexible; his face and form seemed much more indicative of life; youth seemed to be coming back to him at the call of his own fiddle. It was interesting to observe as he became enthusiastic in his fiddling, how sympathetic was his every motion. How his rickety old legs crossed and bobbed up and down; the body in a tremble, and constant movement in the shoulders; while the head was perpetual motion, now hanging down upon his breast, now erect and turning on its socket, now thrown backwards, and such eyes as were in it—poor 'ruined orbs'—directed restlessly towards the ceiling. Archie's *tout ensemble* was a visible embodiment of the doctrine that music incites to motion.

Music has charms to stir the savage breast

no less than to 'soothe' it. Now and then the dancers would cease a while, and seated in benches round the room, would listen in silence to a song. A broad-faced, dull-eyed, young shepherd, with more energy than finish, sang *My Hielan' Hills*, and a dark pawky little man recited out of a

corner very slyly, *Rabbin Tamson's Smiddy*. *The Laird o' Cockpen, Why Left I my Hame?* and *Willie brewed a Peck o' Maut*, were also given; the last named being received with great enthusiasm. There was little culpable indulgence in whisky that I observed. This may have been owing to the judicious arrangements of the host for refreshing his guests during the evening with the national 'toddy' instead of the more potent undiluted spirit. Several times a tray was handed round, bearing piles of bread-and-cheese, and a large jug full of the resuscitating beverage; and though the latter in some cases was a little freely partaken of, there was no unseemly manifestation of its effects.

And thus, through the warm hours of that summer's night, with lonely hills listening in their dreams, the wedding festival of the shepherd's daughter glided merrily along. The sun had been already near two hours climbing up the east, and the pale morning light had once more shot its rays into many a glen and hollow, when these mountain merry-makers ceased their saturnalia. The evening before, they had assembled for the feast trim, fresh, rosy, and buoyant; and when the 'garish day' sent his mocking light through the narrow window-panes and shone upon the forms of the dancers, they looked rosy and buoyant still. The smoothness had departed from their hair and the aspect of freshness from their garments; frills and ribbons had been dragged awry; but the colour was as fresh in their cheeks, and their eyes were quite as lustrious as when eight hours before they had stamped and bobbed and 'hooch'd' through their first Scotch reel. The most of them would tramp their half-dozen miles and more back over the hills, and go through the usual labours of the day with hardly a symptom of fatigue.

When all had come out of the cottage, and immediately before the separation, about three-fourths of the party congregating on the little knoll before the door where the bride's-maid had stood with the handkerchief on the previous evening, sent forth a long-drawn, far-reverberating cheer. Then followed a tumultuous shaking of hands, with many a kindly spoken farewell; and then finally they departed, each group on its own path, for their wide-scattered farms and cottages. Some days would pass during which the memory of the wedding would be continually in their thoughts, forming a mental picture that gave them solace in the midst of outward dreariness. But gradually the lines of the picture would lose their vividness, and it would be less frequently recurred to by the fancy, less fervently yearned after by the heart. Emotions that had been stirred by that night's entertainment would after a while subside again; the old duties would present themselves anew, calling for the old labour and attention; and harmony would be again established between the inward life and the outward circumstances.

The newly married couple had arranged to stay at the cottage till the afternoon, and then to set out for their future home, which lay in the adjoining parish, and about ten miles away. That parish in its whole extent was high-lying and pastoral; and therefore the dwelling to which they were going would be in every way as lonely as the one from which they were departing. From what I had noticed of the bride's mother, she would undoubtedly feel melancholy over the

losing of her daughter, the last that had remained with her out of five ; and I can think of her that afternoon, when the two young people had left her, slipping out to the door, and having shaded her eyes with her hand, taking a far look at them as they passed out of her sight among the hills. Then she would walk pensively back into her now dull-looking kitchen, and perhaps ponder with some sadness about becoming old. The bride and bridegroom would arrive at their abode in the gray hours of the evening, where some relative would be waiting to receive them. It would be such another cottage as the one we have been visiting ; and there, in the wide wilderness, untamed nature on every side of them, they would settle down to await the domesticities that fate might send.

Is there not something almost awe-striking in the thought of civilised human beings settling down to face perhaps half a century of life in solitudes like these, all unconscious of the mighty pulse-beats of the world they dwell in ? It is to be presumed that this red-haired Briton who has just led home his bride across ten miles of moorland, possesses a fair share of practical energy and some fragments of intellect ; he has the faculty of loving his fellow-men and of gaining happiness, perhaps also wisdom, from hours of bright social intercourse. If he were now planted amid stimulating circumstances, a fine moral nature might possibly be developed by the time his years were through. But immured in this mountain fastness, away from human din, his mind will probably never be unfolded to the least self-conscious effort ; and he will leave life at seventy little advanced in intellectual attainment on what he was at twenty-five. For although Nature is an open book, teeming over with wise and great lessons, it is only after toiling through initiatory stages of culture that we can intelligently read her book, or even believe that it exists. The unlettered shepherd nestling in her shaggy bosom, unless she has gifted him with genius, rarely dreams of the truths that she is symbolically publishing around him. And I think of the future life of him whose marriage we have been celebrating as something far different from that of a home-bred philosopher or poet. Performing his simple pastoral duties with honesty of purpose, I can still imagine his life to be monotonous, irksome, and stagnant ; having in it many hours of idleness unillumined by neighbourly greetings or the mystic gleams of intelligent research. As he goes his rounds in summer-time, he will see the wide stillness of morning upon the hills ; in winter he will have to battle with the fury of the storm. The gloaming will find him cultivating an unfruitful garden, or gathering hay out of morasses for his cow, or sitting over his peat-fire knitting homespun stockings or reading legends of the Covenanters. Now and then a distant neighbour, leading a life as lonely as himself, or some wandering angler, will drop in upon him, and be treated to a hospitable meal. But he will hardly see another face the whole year through, except perchance on Sunday—until the 'clipping' season comes round, when he will be called away, now in one direction now in another, to days of social labour.

Some day, let us hope, a wee body will appear upon his hearth—his own offspring, to be loved, nourished, and instructed ; and then probably there

will come another and another till a considerable family is grouped around him. The care and training of these children will be a kind of education to himself. The nursing of them will not fail to develop the womanliness of the wife. Let us hope that she may have much of a mother's happiness and little of a mother's sorrow, and that rosy health will be ever upon her hearth ! May her boys grow up broad-shouldered and manly ; may her girls be handsome, modest, and fair ; and some day or other, a quarter of a century hence, may there be another moorland wedding, when those of us who have assisted at the present one, fiddler and dancers, writer and readers, shall be wearing away or perhaps gathered to 'the land o' the leal.'

E G G-C U L T U R E.

WHY do we import seven or eight hundred million eggs every year, and pay two millions and a half sterling for them ? The answer is, that the demand for eggs is steadily increasing, while the home produce is either lessening or stationary in amount.

Why the home supply does not advance with the increase of demand, is a question that calls for a little attention to the commercial aspects of farming. So many small holdings have been absorbed by large farms, that many a cottage housewife has been withdrawn from rural life who would otherwise have reared cottage poultry ; neither the allotment-holder nor the artisan has range and space enough for rearing eggs to advantage.

In a trade journal called *The Grocer*, in which much information concerning the provision trades is given, the following remarks occur : 'If a due attention to details were given in this country, the stock of fowls which roam about the farmyard and gather corn from the thrashing, instead of being a mere adjunct and perquisite of the servants, would return sufficient to discharge the rental of many a small holding. Such, we have understood, has been the case where the experiment has been fairly tried ; and once this becomes an established notion, our own supplies will increase in a greater ratio than they do at present. According to a competent authority, at this time—what with improved native and imported varieties—we possess the best stock of egg-layers in the world. In no country is the management of our best poultry-yards excelled. These should serve as a model for the rest ; to bring up the wholesale results to their true national importance, all we require is an extension of the taste for poultry-farming amongst those who earn their living on the land.'

The real new-laid eggs of home produce are comparatively few. Their excellence is best appreciated by obtaining them at country farmhouses. The small farmers who do not take nor send their eggs to open market sell them to country shopkeepers, or barter them for other commodities. Many cottagers contrive to keep a few fowls ; and where there is no pig, these fowls act as scavengers, consuming the scraps of the family, the outside cabbage-leaves, peelings of boiled potatoes, &c. ; if the fowls are supplied

with a little corn, they will lay a good many eggs. This desultory mode of leaving poultry to find their food as best they may is, however, quite a mistake, and can never be adequately remunerative. Fowls, to pay, must be well looked after, and systematically fed and housed.

Ireland used to supply England with a considerable number of eggs, and perhaps may continue so to do; but statistical details of the trade between the two portions of the United Kingdom are not now published. About thirty years ago, fifty million eggs were annually shipped from Dublin alone to London and Liverpool, value about a hundred and twenty thousand pounds; the supply obtained from all Ireland very much exceeded this amount. Mr Weld, in his description of Roscommon about that period, noticed some of the features of the egg-trade in the rural districts of Ireland: 'The eggs are collected from the cottages for several miles round by runners, boys nine years old and upwards, each of whom has a regular beat which he goes over daily, bearing back the produce of his toil carefully stored in a small hand-basket. I have frequently met with these boys on their rounds; and the caution necessary for bringing their brittle ware with safety seemed to have communicated an air of business and steadiness to their manner unusual to the ordinary volatile habits of children in Ireland.'

But as we have said, a large supply from abroad has become a necessity; and the characteristics of this supply are worth knowing; because they shew that the trade can be conducted profitably without having recourse to artificial incubation or hatching—a system which has at times had many advocates in England.

The importation of French eggs into this country has increased in an almost incredible degree, owing in part to the facilities afforded by the commercial treaty between England and France. It has risen from about a hundred and fifty million to six or seven hundred million eggs annually, since the year 1860; while the value per thousand has also increased, until at length our importers pay at least two millions and a half sterling for the yearly import. The eggs are brought over chiefly in steamers, and landed at Southampton, Folkestone, Arundel, Newhaven, and Shoreham.

The egg-culture in France is almost exclusively confined to small farmers, who carry it on in a vigorous and commercial spirit, chiefly in Burgundy, Normandy, and Picardy. Every village has its weekly market, to which farmers and their wives bring their produce, in preference to selling at the farmyard to itinerant dealers. A merchant will sometimes buy twenty thousand eggs at one market; he takes them to his warehouse, where they are sorted and packed, and possibly sent off the same day to Paris or to London. According to the conditions required by the buyers, the eggs are sometimes counted, sometimes 'sized' by passing them through a ring, sometimes bought in bulk. In many of the north-west districts of France, poultry villages send almost their whole supply of eggs to England, from Calais, Cherbourg, and Honfleur, packed in cases containing from six hundred to twelve hundred each. Nearly all continental countries producing sufficient eggs for their own supply, the export from France is almost entirely to England. It is found that the buck-

wheat districts are those in which most eggs are reared—possibly a useful hint to English rearers.

The production of eggs for market is one thing, and the hatching of them another. We do not here go into the question of hatching, though much that is interesting could be written on the subject. It is enough to say that all the ingenious plans that have been set on foot for the artificial hatching and rearing of poultry have broken down through the costliness of the arrangements and management. Those who have tried any of these plans have arrived at the conclusion that both eggs and poultry can only be produced on a cheap scale by farmers or cottagers. And this opinion stands to reason. About farmyards and cottages in rural districts, hens can pick up food that would otherwise be wasted. Besides, let it be kept in mind, that hens like to roam about scratching for seeds, worms, and particles of lime to furnish material out of which the shells of their eggs are formed. If kept in confinement, exceeding care is required to supply the creatures with such requisites as their maternal instincts seem to require. What we suggest is, that cottagers, farmers, and others possessing sufficient scope for keeping poultry, should go far more largely into the business of egg-culture than they do at present. Why should they allow the great egg-supply for this country to be in the hands of others? The answer, we fear, is, that our farming classes generally look down contemptuously on the supplying of eggs for market. It is too small an affair to invite consideration. Small! Two millions and a half of money annually carried off by the French. Is that a trade to be treated with indifference?

We hear much of women's work, and of how young ladies should employ themselves. Here is something, at all events, for farmers' wives and daughters to set their face to without the slightest derogation of rank or character. Let them take up in real earnest the culture of fowls, if only for the sake of the eggs which on a great and remunerative scale may be produced. Those farmers' wives who already appropriate part of their leisure to this occupation deserve all honour; and we honour them accordingly.

LINES

TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY.

BY J. PITMAN (WHO DIED 1825).

ENCIRCLED thus by those you love,
May each successive Birthday prove
A source of new delight, nor cast
A single shade upon the past.

Thus ever may thy placid brow
And playful smile bespeak, as now,
The peace that cheers thy gentle breast,
And bids thee still in hope be blest.

And thus may each revolving year
Still leave thy cheek without a tear;
Still Virtue strew thy flowery way
With sweets that never know decay.

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